

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the history of the community of Americans of African descent in the City of Austin is one of neglect and exclusion; and

WHEREAS, City policies enacted via the 1928 Comprehensive Plan required by law that all non-whites be relocated east of what was then known as East Avenue and today as IH-35; and

WHEREAS, 5 acres were purchased in 1905 by the Emancipation Organization of Travis County subsequently named Emancipation Park to use for celebrations such as Juneteenth and was publicly acquired by eminent domain to build Rosewood Courts; and

WHEREAS, Rosewood Courts has been a tremendous asset of community value throughout the 20th and into the 21st century having been built exclusively for working-class Americans of African descent and opened in the year 1939; and

WHEREAS, the historical associations have long-standing significant associations with Americans of African descent in Austin and due to the legal enforcement of segregation in the 20th century represent a way of life of working class low-income individuals; and

WHEREAS, individuals of significance to the community include Eleanor Sims R.N. (1909 -1979) one of the first Americans of African descent to work for the Health Department of the City of Austin, Dr. Jeffrey James (a practicing physician), Gus Swain (1927 -2006) who was the first black male to receive a Masters of Social Work from the University of Texas' School of Social Work; and

WHEREAS, the architectural value has not been significantly compromised insofar as design for lasting utility is the aim of public housing since its inception being the city's and the nation's second public housing community according to the Austin American-Statesman, June 19th 2008; and

WHEREAS, 78702 is the fastest gentrifying zip code in the United States according to Jason Cohen in the Texas Monthly, January 21, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Rosewood Courts is in an area that was once considered blighted and is now in what is fast becoming a high-opportunity area; and

WHEREAS, Santa Rita Courts having been built in the same year received a National Historic Register designation in 2008; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council initiates historic zoning on the Rosewood Courts property located at 2001 Rosewood Avenue Austin, Texas 78702 and directs the City Manager to process historic zoning for this property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council supports the nomination and inclusion of Rosewood Courts in the National Register of Historic Places based on the local and national significance of Rosewood Courts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council instructs the city clerk to forward copies of this resolution to the State Historic Preservation Officer and appropriate officials at the National Park Service and the Austin Housing Authority so it may be a part of the record of the nomination.

ADOPTED: _____, 2016

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk

DRAFT